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Osamu Suzuki

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FORMER SUZUKI MOTOR CHAIRMAN OSAMU SUZUKI PASSES AWAY AT 94

Suzuki, who grew small-car manufacturer Suzuki Motor into an international brand with huge success in India, passed away on Wednesday

REVOLUTIONISED INDIA'S CAR MARKET

He passed away on December 25 due to malignant lymphoma, according to information shared by Japan's Suzuki Motor Corporation on Friday. Suzuki is credited for taking a big risk by partnering with the then Indian government in 1981 to form a joint venture, Maruti Udyog Ltd, when India was a closed economy. The move revolutionised India's car market

PROVED SMALL CARS CAN GIVE BIG BUSINESS

- Calling himself an "old man at a small business", Osamu Suzuki focused on building light-weight 'kei' vehicles, many of which became big hits for their fuel efficiency and easy-to-handle quality
- Under the charismatic businessman's four-decade leadership through 2021, Suzuki Motor's sales grew more than 10-fold to 3 trillion yen

40%

CURRENT MARKET SHARE OF MARUTI SUZUKI IN INDIA'S CAR MARKET

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Cremation today amid party's push for separate resting place

Funeral at 11.45 am at Delhi's Nigambodh Ghat crematorium, says Home Ministry

Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays last respects to former prime minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi on Friday | PTI

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

AHEAD of former prime minister Manmohan Singh's final rites with full state honours, the Congress on Friday requested the Union government for a resting place for him along the banks of the Yamuna in Delhi, where many former PMs have their memorials.

However, sources said that the Centre told the Congress brass to conduct the funeral at the Nigambodh Ghat crematorium on Saturday as scheduled while it will consider the request for a memorial later. Congress sources said they had no option other than to proceed with the plan announced by the Union home ministry.

In his letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Kharge said: "Apropos our telephonic conversation today morning, wherein I made a request to hold Dr Singh's last rites, which will take place tomorrow at his final resting place that would be a sacrosanct venue for a memorial of the great son of India. This is in keeping with such tradition of having memorials of statesmen and former Prime Ministers at the very place of their funerals."

However, a communication from the Ministry of Home Affairs said Singh's last rites will be conducted at 11.45 am on Saturday at the Nigambodh Ghat crematorium with state honours.

Significantly, it was the UPA government headed by Singh that decided in 2013 that there would be no separate memorials for VVIPs in Delhi and decided to have a common complex for memorials of departed national leaders like Presidents, Vice Presidents and Prime Ministers.

However, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh kept up the pressure, wondering why the government could not find a location for his cremation and memorial befitting of his stature. "This is nothing but a deliberate insult to the first Sikh Prime Minister," he alleged.

Former Congress president Sonia Gandhi described Manmohan Singh's demise as a "deeply personal loss".

A condolence resolution passed by the Congress Working Committee said he was a towering figure in India's political and economic landscape whose contributions transformed the country and earned him respect worldwide.

> He left his imprint on our national life. The nation has lost an eminent statesman, renowned economist and a distinguished leader
>
> Union Cabinet resolution

MODI AMONG FIRST TO PAY HOMAGE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was among the first ones to pay homage to Singh and lay a wreath on Friday, said the death was a big loss and the nation lost an able statesman

SINGH'S FINAL PROCESSION AT 9.30 AM

On Saturday, his mortal remains will be taken to AICC HQ at 8 am, where party cadre and the public can offer tributes. The final procession to the cremation ground will depart at 9.30 am

PERSONAL LOSS, SAYS SONIA

Terming his death a "personal loss", Congress leader Sonia Gandhi on Friday said Singh was her friend, philosopher and guide. She said Singh leaves a void in the national life that can't be filled

CHAMPION OF INDO-U.S. TIES: BLINKEN

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Singh was one of the greatest champions of US-India strategic partnership who brought the two countries closer

STATESMAN LIKE NO OTHER: PUTIN

Russian President Vladimir Putin described former prime minister Manmohan Singh as an outstanding statesman who elevated India-Russia ties to greater heights

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and DCM DK Shivakumar pay tributes to former PM Manmohan Singh in Belagavi on Friday | EXPRESS

Siddu, DKS recall Singh's contributions

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Belagavi

THE CPEd Ground here, which was decked up for the mega Congress convention on Friday, became the venue of the party's condolence meeting where its state leaders recalled the contributions of former prime minister Manmohan Singh for the country's growth.

Paying rich tributes, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said Dr Singh was an eminent economist who served as PM for 10 years. When senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi declined to become PM, she chose Dr Singh for the top post. Dr Singh led the government at the Centre successfully.

During his tenure as finance minister in the Narasimha Rao cabinet, Dr Singh not only initiated measures that revived the Indian economy, but also its global standing.

Siddaramaiah said Dr Singh had described Karnataka's economy from 2004 to 2018 as robust. He was globally recognised as an eminent economist and had occupied prominent positions. Despite his achievements, Dr Singh lived a simple life and remained humble, the CM added.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said that he would place a proposal before the CM and the higher education minister to set up a centre for economics studies and research in Bangalore University in honour of Dr Singh.

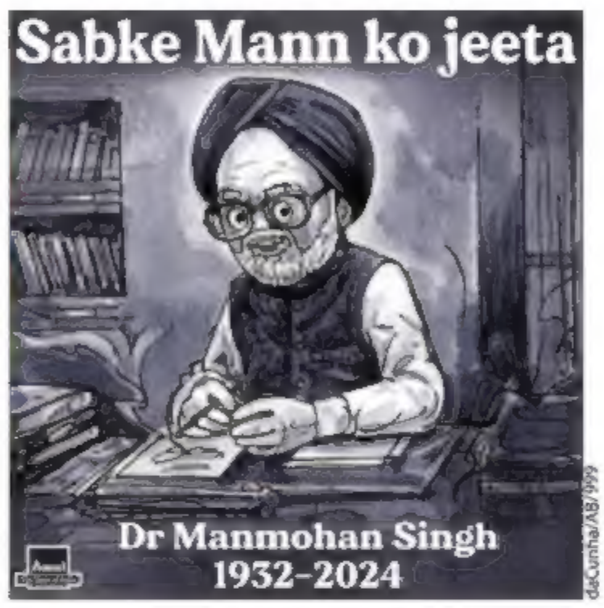
Shivakumar said Dr Singh's initiatives such as the right to education, right to health and the right to food made a big difference as far as the country's growth is concerned. The move to increase compensation for losses incurred by farmers was taken by Dr Singh. Dr Singh waived 70,000 farm loans for the first time in the country, Shivakumar added.

Several Congress leaders, including former CM Veerappa Moily, Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil spoke about the life and achievements of Dr Singh.

GOWDA PAYS HOMAGE: P4

CM, DCM FOR NEW DELHI

Soon after the condolence meeting, Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar left for New Delhi to attend the funeral of Dr Singh



HOUSEHOLD SURVEY 2023-24

RURAL, URBAN CONSUMPTION GAP NARROWS

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

THE gap between urban and rural consumption narrowed as the average monthly per capita consumption expenditure grew 9% in nominal term in rural areas and 8% in urban areas in 2023-24, the latest household consumption data released by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation showed. The gap between urban and rural consumption declined to 70% in 2023-24 from 71% in the previous year.

The household consumption survey was conducted from August 2023 to July 2024. According to the new data, monthly consumption expenditure in current prices was ₹4,122 in rural areas and ₹6,996 in urban areas in 2023-24. In the previous year, the average monthly consumption expenditure was ₹3,773 in rural areas and ₹6,549 in urban. In real terms (2011-12 price), the increase in both rural and urban consumption is only 3.5% to ₹2,079 and ₹3,632, respectively.

This paper had on December 3 reported the household consumption expenditure survey report of 2023-24 would be released soon. The government was awaiting the consumption data as it has to decide the new base year for calculating economic data such as GDP and inflation. The new base year could be either 2022-23 or 2023-24. The Consumer Price Index basket would also be changed accordingly. It is likely that the weightage of food in CPI basket will be aligned based on the consumption survey report. Currently, food has a weightage of 44.6% in the combined CPI, which tracks the retail inflation.

Average MPCE for major states

STATE	RURAL	URBAN
Kerala	6,611	7,783
Tamil Nadu	5,701	8,165
Telangana	5,435	8,978
Andhra	5,327	7,182
Karnataka	4,903	8,076
Odisha	3,357	5,825
Uttar Pradesh	3,481	5,395
Maharashtra	4,145	7,363

(MPCE-Monthly per-capita consumption expenditure)

MANMOHAN SINGH BELIEVED IN GROWTH WITH EQUITY

KAPIL SIBAL
Member of Rajya Sabha

DR Manmohan Singh belongs to an era when politicians were respected for allowing institutions to flourish. It is not as if there were no aberrations in the past. By and large, the spirit of the Constitution was honoured by those in power. Even when Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the Prime Minister (1999-2004), he respected and heard the voice of the opposition. Narasimha Rao, on one occasion, requested Vajpayee, who was the Leader of Opposition at the time, to lead a delegation to the UN. It was during those years that Manmohan Singh, from being a bureaucrat, who served the nation in several capacities, became the Prime Minister in 2004.

The opening up of the Indian economy, when a radical shift was made in 1991, by Singh as Finance Minister with India's balance of payments in deep crisis. His economic liberalisation policy paved the way for what India is today. Every sector of the economy moved away from the licence quota raj and from a 3.3% growth rate prior to 1991, we in the 1990s witnessing India's GDP growing at 6%. Between 2004 and 2014, GDP growth averaged 7.7% with 8.1% average growth between 2004 and 2009.

Those were golden years, when India's growth story was lauded internationally and 271 million people moved above the poverty line. Economic growth during these years was tempered with equity. Singh believed that growth without equity, is not the path India should tread.

His commitment to Parliament and Parliamentary institutions was unmatched. He sat through the debates, listening to the opposition and attempted, to the extent possible, to move forward with consensus. He did not have the luxury of a brute majority in the Lok Sabha and therefore, had to navigate his policies through dialogue both with his coalition partners and the opposition. The dialogues, with his coalition partners, allowed him to make some monumental decisions.

The Right to Information Act, 2005, brought about enormous transparency in the process of decision making. With information available to citizens, government could be held accountable, making transparency a policy prescription. The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, allowed 25% of children belonging to the poor and marginalised communities to be admitted to private schools where their education was subsidised from Class I to Class VIII. These changes in many senses recognised that unless people at the bottom of the pyramid have opportunities, India will continue to be an iniquitous society.

CONTINUED ON: P9

EXPRESS READ

2 more Ayyappa devotees succumb, toll 4

Hubballi: Two more Ayyappa devotees, who sustained burns in a cylinder explosion and were admitted to KIMS Hospital, have succumbed to their injuries. The deceased are Raju Mugeri (21) and Lingaraj Birnoor (19). The death toll has now gone up to four.

Mumbai attack plotter Makki dies of heart attack

AGENCIES

PAKISTAN-based terrorist **Abdul Rehman Makki**, a key figure in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks that killed 174 people and injured over 300, on Friday died of a heart attack in Lahore, Pakistan. He was 70 years old and had been undergoing treatment for diabetes.

He was the brother-in-law of Mumbai attacks mastermind Hafiz Saeed and the deputy chief of the banned Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD).

According to the JuD, Makki had been ill for the past few days and was undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Lahore. "Makki suffered a cardiac arrest early this morning and he breathed his last in the hospital," news agency PTI quoted a JuD official as saying.

In 2020, Makki was handed six months-imprisonment in a terror financing case by an anti-terrorism court in Pakistan. However, another court in Pakistan commuted this to a paltry fine of ₹50,000. After this incident, however, Makki had been keeping a low profile. In 2023, Makki was designated as a global terrorist by the UN.

B'luru Metro services till 2.40am for NY

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

FOR the convenience of New Year revellers, Namma Metro will be operational till 2.40 am on January 1.

The last train from Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Metro Station (Majestic) will leave at 2.40am. The last trains from terminal stations such as Silk Institute, Madavara, Challaghatta and Whitefield (Kadugodi) will leave at 2am. However, the MG Road Metro station will be closed at 11pm to avoid overcrowding.

A press release from Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) said trains will run at 10-minute intervals from 11pm on December 31 till the extended operational hours on January 1. However, the MG Road Metro Station will be closed at 11 pm on December 31 to prevent overcrowding. Trains will stop at Trinity and Cubbon Park stations, the release said.

People using Metro services after 11pm from Trinity or Cubbon Park stations to any destination have been requested to purchase return journey paper tickets priced at Rs 50 instead of tokens. Metro travel cards and QR code tickets are valid. Paper tickets can be purchased at all Metro stations from 8am on December 31.

To avoid overcrowding, those proceeding towards Whitefield and Silk Institute stations have been requested to use Trinity Metro Station for boarding. People proceeding towards Challaghatta and Madavara have been requested to use Cubbon Park Metro Station.

Wheeling: 2 teens die as scooter rams truck

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

TWO teenagers, who were performing dangerous stunts on a scooter, died after colliding with a truck near Vijayapura bypass road in Devanahalli taluk on the outskirts of Bengaluru on Friday morning.

The deceased have been identified as Abrez Pasha, 18, who was riding the scooter, and pillion rider Manoj, 16. Both were residents of Vijayapura town. Manoj was a Class 8 student. Pasha, who discontinued his studies, was unemployed.

Police said around 9.30am, Pasha and Manoj were performing wheelie while speeding towards 'H' Cross from Devanahalli when the accident occurred. Pasha lost control over his scooter and collided with the truck coming in the opposite direction. Pasha died on the spot. Manoj, who suffered grievous injuries, was rushed to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead. Pasha did not have a driving license.

Vijayapura police have seized the scooter and registered a case against its owner.